

REMARKS

This Amendment is being filed in response to the Office Action mailed February 23, 2006. For the following reasons this application should be allowed and the case passed to issue. No new matter is introduced by this amendment. The amendments to claims 1, 6, 7, and 8 are supported by originally filed claim 2. The amendments to claims 3 and 4 maintain proper dependency.

Claims 1 and 3-8 are pending in this application. Claims 1 and 5-8 have been rejected. Claims 2-4 are objected to. Claims 1, 3, 4, and 6-8 have been amended in this response. Claim 2 has been canceled in this response.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 2-4 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication of allowable subject matter. In accordance with the Examiner's recommendations, claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 2. Therefore, claim 1 should be allowable. The limitations of claim 2 have also been added to independent claims 6, 7, and 8. Thus, claims 6, 7, and 8 should also be allowable.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1 and 5-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Reynier et al. (U.S. 3,960,599) in view of Nishijima et al. (U.S. Pub. Pat. App. No. 2004/0043288). This rejection is traversed, and reconsideration and withdrawal thereof respectfully requested.

The Examiner asserted that Reynier et al. disclose an electrochemical generator comprising a positive electrode (1) provided on surface of a collector (9) and a negative

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electrode (2) provided on the surface of a collector (8), and a sealing layer (25). The Examiner acknowledges that Reynier et al. do not disclose a gel electrolyte sandwiched between the lithium and transition metal composite oxide positive electrode, and the carbon or lithium and transition metal composite oxide negative electrode, and a vehicle comprising the assembled battery wherein the battery is formed by heating and pressurizing a portion of the sealing layers from sides of the collectors in a state where a plurality of the electrodes, gel electrolyte and the sealing layers are stacked thereon. The Examiner averred that Nishijima et al. teach the gel electrolyte sandwiched between the positive and negative electrodes and sealing a battery assembly by thermo-welding. The Examiner concluded that it would have been obvious to combine the teachings of Nishijima et al. with Reynier et al. to create a battery with less electrolyte leakage potential and with good ionic conductivity.

Reynier et al. and Nishijima et al., whether taken in combination, or alone, do not suggest the claimed bipolar battery, assembled battery, vehicle, and method for manufacturing a bipolar battery. Claim 1 was amended to include the limitations of claim 2 in accordance with the Examiner's recommendation, and is therefore allowable. Claims 6, 7, and 8 have also been amended to include the limitations of claim 2.

Reynier et al. and Nishijima et al. do not suggest the sealing layer is made of a first resin provided to be positioned on sides of the collectors and a non-conductive second resin which is sandwiched by the first resin and has a higher melting point than that of the first resin, and the collectors and the sealing layer are thermally welded at a temperature between the melting points of the first resin and the second resin, as required by claims 1, 6, 7; and do not suggest the sealing layer being made of a first resin provided to be positioned on sides of the collectors and a non-conductive second resin which is sandwiched by the first resin and has a higher melting

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point than that of the first resin; and heating and pressurizing a portion of the sealing layers from sides of end collectors in a state where a plurality of the bipolar electrodes, the gel electrolytes and the sealing layers are stacked on each other, at a temperature between the melting points of the first resin and the second resin, as required by claim 8. Therefore, claims 1, 6, 7, and 8 are allowable over the cited prior art.

The dependent claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as independent claim 1 and further distinguish the claimed invention.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that this application should be allowed and the case passed to issue. If there are any questions regarding this Amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated to expedite the prosecution of the application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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